

AMENDMENTS

In the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions or listings of claims for this application.

1. (Currently amended) A charge metering method for data transmission in a telephone network comprising a centralized network and decentralized network resources, comprising:

storing an electronic credit which includes a statement on the amount of use of transmission units of the telephone network on two terminals operated on the data transmission network;

controlling use of data transmission units of the telephone network by two control units based at a terminating end of the respective terminals and decentralized from the centralized network;

transmitting the electronic credit for use of a data transmission path to one of the control units;

determining at the respective terminating end whether the credit transmitted is valid; and

reserving [[by]] the data transmission units of the telephone network to use the data transmission path for communicating voice data between the two terminals in response to determining that the electronic credit received is valid.

2. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein one of the terminals sends the other terminal the electronic credit, and the electronic credit coming from the one terminal is sent by the other terminal to the assigned control unit.

3. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 2, wherein the terminal sending the electronic credit is the terminal beginning the data transmission or the terminal responding to a network-side request for data transmission.

4. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the electronic credit is issued in conjunction with the data transmission path which is to be set up or has been set up.

5. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the electronic credit includes at least a statement of the data transmission path including at least one of an identification of the terminal beginning the data transmission, an identification of the other terminal, an identification for the interface used in the data transmission of the terminal beginning the data transmission, an identification for the interface used in the data transmission of the other terminal and an identification for a transmission protocol used in the data transmission, wherein the statement is checked by the control units.

6. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein a period of validity or a date of validity is electronically fixed for the at least one electronic credit, and the period of validity is at least one of less than approximately five minutes, less than approximately one minute or less than approximately 30 seconds from the issue of the electronic credit, and the period of validity and/or the date of validity are checked by the control units.

7. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 5, wherein the statement included in the electronic credit is protected with the aid of a cryptographic method, and the control units check the genuineness of the electronic credit.

8. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 6, wherein the statement included in the credits is protected with the aid of a cryptographic method, and the control units check the genuineness of the electronic credits.

9. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the telephone network is a data transmission network operating in accordance with Internet Protocol, and/or for setting up the data transmission path the protocol SIP is used, and/or for allocating the network resources of the data transmission network the protocol RSVP or a protocol for the method DiffServ is used.

10. (Previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the method is used for the transmission of voice data as part of a telephone service.

11. (Previously presented) A telephone network, comprising:

two terminals operated on a data transmission network storing an electronic credit which includes a statement on an amount of use of transmission units of the network; and

two control units based at a terminating end of the respective terminals and decentralized from the centralized network by which use of data transmission units of the telephone network is controlled, wherein

the terminals transmit the electronic credit for use of a data transmission path to a respective one of the control units, and based on the electronic credit received, the control units reserve the transmission units of the telephone network for communication voice data between the two terminals using the data transmission path.

12. (Previously presented) A computer readable medium having a program with a series of commands, a processor of a telephone network, executing the program to perform:

storing an electronic credit which includes a statement on an amount of use of transmission units of a data transmission network on two terminals operated on the telephone network;

controlling the use of data transmission units of the telephone network by two control units that are based at a terminating end of the respective terminals and decentralized from the centralized network;

transmitting the credit for use of a data transmission path to a respective one of the control units;

reserving the data transmission units of the telephone network for communicating voice data between the two terminals using the data transmission path in response to the electronic credit received.

13. (Previously presented) A control unit in which data transmission units of a telephone network including a centralized network and decentralized network resources, is controlled, wherein a terminal transmits an electronic credit for use of a data transmission path to an assigned control

unit based at a terminating end of another terminal, and based on the electronic credit received, the assigned control unit reserves the transmission units of the telephone network for communicating voice data between the terminal and the another terminal.

14. (Previously presented) A terminal operated on a telephone network, storing an electronic credit which includes a statement on an amount of use of transmission units of the telephone network, wherein

the terminal transmits the electronic credit for use of a data transmission path to an assigned control unit, and based on credit received, the control unit reserves the transmission units of the telephone network to use the data transmission path for communicating voice data between the terminal and another terminal.